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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Senator Carl Levin
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Levin:

I write to you to express our concern about the imperiled future of our educational wireless spectrum. The Federal Communications has issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (ET Docket No. 00-258, RM-9920 and 9911) seeking comment on a plan to relinquish Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) channels to cellular phone companies for third generation (3G) mobile telephone services, stripping our nation's educational community of a powerful and irreplaceable medium.

ITFS is an important part of our educational program at Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency. Moreover, ITFS is absolutely critical if wireless broadband is to become a reality not only for our students but also for our entire community.

Over 1,200 school districts, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations have held ITFS licenses, many of which were issued decades ago. The majority of ITFS licenses have traditionally provided one-way video broadcasting, but recent FCC rule changes have expanded the educational power of ITFS to provide advanced learning services, interactive video, and wireless broadband Internet access to students and adult learners in classrooms, homes and workplaces. As distance learning becomes more robust and interactive, ITFS offers educational institutions throughout the country an affordable high-speed on-ramp to the Internet, a mission that was recently cited as the first priority for policymakers by the bipartisan Congressional Web-Based Education Commission. In addition, fixed wireless broadband promises to bring a competitor to DSL and cable modem technologies to our community, making broadband access not only more widely available but also more affordable.

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THE WAYNE COUNTY REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

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Senator Carl Levin

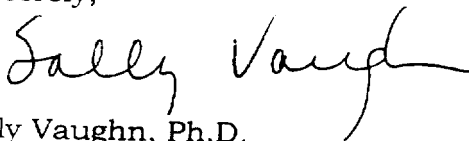
We are currently using our ITFS spectrum to provide a broad range of distance learning classes for our students. In addition to our current uses, we are already planning for the transition to two-way services. We intend to use these services to provide affordable wide area networking to all of our schools (at a very affordable price!), saving many thousands of dollars per year. We also intend to use two-way service to provide interactive video to our classrooms, allowing for greater student-teacher interaction than our current on-way ITFS system permits.

ITFS will not only benefit schools, however. In addition to the broad range of community programming currently carried on ITFS spectrum, the recent two-way order has filled a void where legislation and regulation have failed. Working in conjunction with wireless communications companies, ITFS is helping to bring broadband to underserved populations in rural, urban and otherwise isolated communities nationwide. ITFS licensees are therefore serving the educational community as they help the nation bridge and Digital Divide.

If the FCC reallocates any part of the ITFS spectrum for 3G mobile device services, the capacity, usefulness, and value of ITFS would be significantly diminished. Even if only part of the spectrum is taken away, many educational institutions would face new equipment costs, service disruption and cutbacks, lower quality of service and signal interference. In either scenario, the ITFS community would be incapable of supporting advanced wireless services and promoting the development of broad and services to the educational community and to underserved communities nationwide.

If the ITFS spectrum is compromised in any way, these public benefits will be lost. We at the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency hope that you will support us in maintaining the integrity of our spectrum and in keeping this tremendous educational resource alive and well. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Sally Vaughn, Ph.D.
Associate Superintendent for Learning Services

SV/gh